

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W  
-----141924Z 037435 /53

O 141835Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4198

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 0334

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, GY  
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FONMIN WILLS FEBRUARY 11

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 326 (B) GEORGETOWN 325

SUMMARY: DURING FEBRUARY 11 MEETING WITH ME, FOREIGN MINISTER WILLS DISCUSSED HIS REASONS FOR WANTING AN EARLY MARCH MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY AND OUTLINED IN SKETCHY FASHION TOPICS HE WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS IN THAT MEETING. HE APPEARS TO VIEW THE VISIT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HALT THE DETERIORATION IN US-GUYANESE RELATIONS WHICH, HE BELIEVES, STARTED WITH GUYANA'S DECISION IN 1970 TO BECOME A COOPERATIVE SOCIALIST STATE. HE WILL TRY TO EXPLAIN THAT GUYANA'S SOCIALISM, ITS NON-ALIGNED POSTURE, ITS TENDENCY TO REACT ADVERSELY TO PRESSURES, REAL OR IMAGAINED, FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, ITS RELATIONS WITH THE "SOCIALIST" WORLD ALL CONSTITUTE NO THREAT TO US INTERESTS. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE MY RETURN, HE REVEALED GUYANA'S HOPE FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE US. THE CABINET MEETING FEBRUARY 9 HAD ENDORSED WILLS' TRIP TO THE US AND HIS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE US. HE REVEALED, HOWEVER, THAT SOME STRONG EMOTIONS STILL LINGER CONCERNING THE RECRIMINATIONS OF LAST OCTOBER. HE ALSO INDICATED SOME CONCERN THAT THE US MIGHT SUDDENLY RESTORE RELATIONS WITH CUBA, LEAVING GUYANA OUT IN THE COLD.

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WILLS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE MORE CIRCUMSPECT IN APPROACHING THE SUBJECT OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WITH THE SECRETARY THAN HE WAS WITH ME. NEVERTHELESS I WAS SURPRISED OVER THE OPTIMISM WILLS DISPLAYED FEBRUARY 11 IN COMPARISON TO HIS MORE PESSIMISTIC OUTLOOK ON FEBRUARY 7 (REF B). END SUMMARY.

1. REF A LISTED PER TUMMINIA'S REQUEST TOPICS WILLS MEN-

TIONED HE WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH THE SECRETARY. THIS MESSAGE REPORTS MORE FULLY ON AND PLACES IN PERSPECTIVE WILLS' COMMENTS DURING OUR FEBRUARY 11 MEETING.

2. WILLS BEGAN OUR MEETING BY CRITICIZING AMBASSADOR MANN FOR APPARENTLY NOT HAVING SOUGHT THE MEETING WITH SECRETARY VANCE IN FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH. WILLS SAID HE WANTED AN EARLY MEETING IN ORDER TO HELP REVERSE THE ANTI-US MOMENTUM THAT HAD DEVELOPED IN GUYANA. THE EARLIER THE MEETING, THE GREATER ITS POSITIVE IMPACT WOULD BE. ALSO HE WANTED TO DISCUSS BILATERAL, REGIONAL AND NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES WITH THE SECRETARY BEFORE THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WERE FIRMLY SET.

3. I EXPLAINED THAT THE SECRETARY'S TRAVEL AND SCHEDULED MEETINGS MADE A FEBRUARY MEETING WITH WILLS IMPOSSIBLE. HE REPLIED THAT HE HOPED HE COULD GET AN APPOINTMENT AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN MARCH. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD INFORM THE SECRETARY OF HIS REQUEST. I THEN ASKED WHAT SPECIFIC TOPICS HE WOULD DISCUSS WITH THE SECRETARY. HE LISTED SEVERAL TOPICS (PARA 2, REF A) IN A NON-STRUCTURED MANNER WHICH INDICATED TO ME THAT HE HAD NOT YET WORKED UP AN AGENDA FOR HIS MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY. ESSENTIALLY, HE WISHES TO CLARIFY FOR THE NEW US ADMINISTRATION THE VIEWS HE AND BURNHAM EXPRESSED TO ME CONCERNING RELATIONS WITH THE US, GUYANA'S NON-ALIGNED POLICIES, ITS BRAND OF SOCIALISM AND OTHER SUBJECTS DURING OUR CONVERSATIONS IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR, BEFORE THE CRISIS OVER THE CUBANA AIRLINER OCCURRED. IN PARTICULAR, HE WOULD LIKE FOR THE

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US TO ABSTRACT ITS RELATIONS WITH GUYANA FROM THE CONTEXT OF THE RIVALRY BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION. HE INSISTED AGAIN THAT GUYANA IS NOT ANTI-US.

4. HE LED INTO THE TOPIC OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE BY SAYING HE WANTED TO DISCUSS GUYANA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, "INCLUDING A LIQUIBVZY PROBLEM WHICH IS NOT BEING SOLVED." HE SUGGESTED THAT US USE ITS INFLUENCE IN IMF AND IADB TO HELP GUYANA GET FUNDS, THEN LATER RETURNED TO THE SUBJECT BY ASKING ME WHY THE US DOES NOT PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE CARIBBEAN. HE CLAIMED THAT EUROPE AND ASIA (JAPAN) HAD AND WERE BENEFITTING FROM THE US, YET LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN ESPECIALLY WERE OVERLOOKED.

5. I REMINDED HIM OF OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS (JAN.27 AND FEB. 7) IN WHICH I HAD SUGGESTED THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO RESTORE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE THROUGH A SERIES OF RECIPROCAL ACTIONS BEFORE SUBSTANTIVE ACTIONS--SUCH AS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE--COULD BE EXPECTED. WILLS ACKNOWLEDGED THIS,

BUT WENT ON TO SAY THAT GUYANA POLITICALLY COULD ACCEPT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE US. I INQUIRED WHETHER HE INTENDED THAT ASSISTANCE SHOULD COME PRIMARILY THROUGH ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, IMF, AND IABD OR THROUGH BILATERAL CHANNELS. HE RESPONDED THAT HE CONSIDERED BILATERAL AID MORE BENEFICIAL BUT HOPED THAT THE US ALSO WOULD INCREASE ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUCH FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 0334

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y //TEXT//

6. THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSISTANCE WOULD BE HELP WITH THE UPPER MAZZRUNI HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT. THIS, HE SAID, WOULD HAVE TREMENDOUS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE WITH BURNHAM. HE SAID THAT BURNHAM, HUBERT JACK (MIN. OF ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES), AND DESMOND HOYTE (MIN. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT) REGARDED THE HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT AS THE WAY GUYANA COULD EVENTUALLY " GET OFF THE DOLE" AND BECOME FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT. THEY ALSO THOUGHT THAT SUCH A LARGE-SCALE PROJECT WOULD PROVIDE STRONG IMMEDIATE STIMULUS TO THE ECONOMY AND DRAW BACK TO GUYANA MANY OF THE WELL-QUALIFIED GUYANESE WHO HAD EMMIGRATED TO THE US AND CANADA. WILLS PERSONALLY EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE IDEA OF PERSUADING PEOPLE WHO HAD ESTABLISHED COMFORTABLE LIVES ELSEWHERE TO RETURN TO GUYANA.

7. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD LISTENED TO HUBERT JACK'S ARGUMENTS AND I SYMPATHIZED WITH GUYANA'S DREAMS ABOUT THE HYDRO-ELECTRIC/SMELTER PROJECT, BUT I SAW PROBLEMS. I SAID

DOUBTS EXISTED OVER THE FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT. WILLS REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW ANY OF THE TECHNICAL DETAILS, BUT HE DID KNOW THAT TO EXPRESS DOUBTS  
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ABOUT THE PROJECT DURING CABINET MEETINGS MADE ONE SUBJECT TO SHARP CRITICISM. HE THEN COMMENTED THAT HAMILTON GREEN, MINISTER OF COOPERATIVES, HAD SEVERAL TIMES TAKEN THE POSITION THAT GUYANA OUGHT TO ENGAGE IN SMALLER-SCALE DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN MAKING THE LEAP TO THE HYDRO PROJECT BUT GREEN HAD NOT MADE ANY HEADWAY.

8. WITH REFERENCE TO IMPROVEMENT IN US-GUYANESE RELATIONS, WILLS SAID THAT THE SMALL SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND PROJECTS USAID HAD ACTIVATED LAST YEAR HAD BEEN USEFUL IN IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF THE US WITH THE GUYANESE PUBLIC AND WOULD BE HELPFUL IF WE COULD ACTIVATE THEM AGAIN. I MENTIONED THE LETTER THAT THE AID MISSION HAD RECEIVED FROM HOYTE'S MINISTRY, FOLLOWING BURNHAM'S SPEECH, REQUESTING THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES BE SUSPENDED. WILLS SAID RADICALS IN THE PARTY OPPOSED THAT PROGRAM AND IN THE CLIMATE THAT HAD EXISTED RECENTLY NO ONE COULD HAVE DEFENDED IT. HE THOUGHT WE MIGHT EXPLORE THE ISSUE WITH DESMOND HOYTE NOW. HE WARNED ME, HOWEVER, THAT HOYTE, EVEN MORE THAN BURNHAM, HAD BEEN ANGERED BY THE "BALD FACE LIES" STATEMENT. HOYTE'S ADULATION OF BURNHAM WAS BEYOND BELIEF AND HE STILL RANKLED OVER THE MATTER. FOR EXAMPLE, AFTER THE CABINET HAD VOTED THIS PAST WEEK TO AUTHORIZE WILLS' TRIP TO WASHINGTON, HOYTE HAD SAID, "NOW, I HOPE YOU WILL DEMAND AN APOLOGY FROM VANCE." WILLS SAID HE HAD REPLIED THAT HE WOULD DO NOTHING OF THE KIND AS PRESENT ADMINISTRATION HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT STATEMENT.

9. WILLS SHOWED GREAT INTEREST IN STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN RESPONSE TO CASTRO'S RECENT STATEMENT, AND COMMENTED THAT ONE OF HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES HAD NEEDLED HIM BY COMMENTING THAT ONE MORNING GUYANA WOULD WAKE UP AND FIND THAT THE US AND CUBA HAD REESTABLISHED RELATIONS, AND GUYANA WOULD BE FORGOTTEN BY BOTH. I TOLD HIM THAT I DOUBTED ANY PRECIPITOUS MOVES WOULD BE MADE TOWARD CUBA AND THAT THE PANAMA CANAL SEEMED TO BE THE ADMINISTRATION'S  
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TOP PRIORITY IN LATIN AMERICA AT THIS TIME.

10. COMMENT: GUYANESE ATTITUDES ABOUT ITS RELATIONSHIP

WITH THE US ARE CONFUSED, CONFUSING, CONTRADICTORY AND, AS MY CONVERSATIONS WITH WILLS DURING THE PAST TWO WEEKS SHOW, SUBJECT TO RAPID CHANGE. FOR EXAMPLE, I NOTE THAT WHEN WE TALK OF VOTING PATTERNS IN THE UN WILLS INSISTS THAT WE CONSIDER GUYANA ALONG WITH THE AFRO-ASIAN NATIONS (REF B), BUT WHEN HE TALKS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE GUYANA IS AGAIN PART OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE CARIBBEAN. SINCE MY RETURN I HAVE TAKEN PAINS TO STRESS MY VIEW THAT RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE WOULD TAKE TIME AND REQUIRE ACTIONS BY THE GOG INDICATING ITS COMMITMENT TO HAVING FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE US. WILLS AND OTHERS HAVE SAID THAT THEY UNDERSTOOD, YET HE IS ALREADY BRINGING UP THE SUBJECT OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

11. WILLS AND THE OTHER CABINET MINISTERS WITH WHOM I HAVE TALKED REGARD THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WITH OPTIMISM. WILLS APPEARS TO REGARD HIS UPCOMING MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVERSE THE DETERIORATION IN US-GUYANESE RELATIONS THAT HAS BEEN UNDERWAY SINCE THE EARLY 1970S. HE SEEMS TO THINK THAT THE PROBLEM IN US-GUYANESE RELATIONS AROSE DUE TO AN INABILITY OF THE PREVIOUS US ADMINISTRATION TO UNDERSTAND THAT GUYANA'S SOCIALISM, MILITANT NON-ALIGNED POLICIES, AND EXPANDING RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES POSED NO THREAT TO THE US. THUS, THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE US WILL TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THEIR DECISION TO ESTABLISH A SOCIALIST SOCIETY, MAINTAIN ITS STANDING IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND CONTINUE RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. WILLS AND OTHERS, WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT THE GOG HAS MADE TACTICAL ERRORS IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THAT BURNHAM'S SPEECH WAS ONE OF THOSE ERRORS, APPEAR TO HAVE NOT YET FORMULATED A PLAN CALLING FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS TO IMPROVE US-GUYANESE  
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RELATIONS.

12. DESPITE MY ADMONITIONS THAT A SERIES OF GESTURES AND ACTIONS DEMONSTRATING GUYANA'S COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING RELATIONS WILL BE NEEDED, WILLS APPEARS TO BE MAINLY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE OBSTACLES ON THE GUYANESE SIDE TO IMPROVING RELATIONS, RATHER THAN TO BE THINKING CREATIVELY ABOUT THINGS THE GOG CAN DO TO COURT THE US. I INTEND TO CONTINUE TO RESTRAIN HIS OPTIMISM THAT SUDDENLY ALL CAN BE MADE ROSY WITHOUT SOME CONCRETE ACTIONS BY THE GOG. END COMMENT.  
BLACKEN

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## Message Attributes

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